

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 70

Introduced by Assembly Member Wright

December 14, 2000

An act to add Article 5.7 (commencing with Section 8590) to Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code, relating to fire safety, making an appropriation therefor, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 70, as introduced, Wright. Firefighting equipment.

Existing law authorizes the Office of Emergency Services to acquire new or used firefighting apparatus and equipment for resale to local agencies and to provide other assistance to agencies for the acquisition of firefighting apparatus and equipment.

This bill would establish in the office the thermal imaging equipment purchasing program and require the office to acquire firefighting thermal imaging equipment on behalf of local agencies that provide fire suppression services and are interested in obtaining this equipment. The bill would authorize the director of the office to, among other things, purchase thermal imaging equipment at the lowest possible price from a reliable vendor that meets specified requirements.

This bill would appropriate \$25 million from the General Fund to the office for the thermal imaging equipment purchasing program.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Vote: ²/₃. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) Firefighters every day risk their lives and should be equipped with the best available equipment that can reduce their risk of harm when fighting fires and increase the survival rate of fire victims.

(b) Thermal imaging technology and equipment now exist to increase firefighters' ability to work safely in a smoke-filled environment by allowing them to see and maneuver amidst smoke, locate the fire, and identify victims and other firefighters more quickly, thereby saving lives and money.

(c) Thermal imaging equipment is expensive, costing in the range of \$18,000 to \$25,000 per unit.

(d) A growing number of fire departments across the nation use thermal imaging equipment. The State of New Jersey has purchased a thermal imaging unit for each fire station in that state.

(e) It is the intent of the Legislature to create a state purchasing program to leverage the state's buying power to purchase thermal imaging equipment for firefighters throughout the State of California.

SEC. 2. Article 5.7 (commencing with Section 8590) is added to Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code, to read:

Article 5.7. Firefighting Thermal Imaging Equipment Act of 2001

8590. This article shall be known and may be cited as the Firefighting Thermal Imaging Equipment Act of 2001.

8590.1. As used in this article:

(a) "Director" means the Director of the Office of Emergency Services.

(b) "Local agency" means any city, county, city and county, fire district, special district, or joint powers agency that provides fire suppression services. "Local agency" also includes a fire company organized pursuant to Part 4 (commencing with Section 14825) of Division 12 of the Health and Safety Code.

(c) "Office" means the Office of Emergency Services.

1 8590.2. There is established in the office a thermal imaging
2 equipment purchasing program under which the office shall
3 acquire firefighting thermal imaging equipment on behalf of local
4 agencies that are interested in obtaining this equipment. The
5 minimum goal of the program is to purchase at least one
6 firefighting thermal imaging unit for each fire station of every
7 interested local agency.

8 8590.3. In administering the purchasing program, the director
9 shall do all of the following:

10 (a) Establish an advisory committee, which shall be comprised
11 of representatives of organizations including, but not limited to,
12 the California Fire Chiefs Association, the Fire Districts
13 Association of California, the California Professional Firefighters,
14 the California Department of Forestry, and the California State
15 Firefighters Association, Inc.

16 (b) Consult with the advisory committee regarding equipment
17 specifications and other matters relating to the acquisition of
18 thermal imaging equipment, and require the advisory committee
19 to formulate specifications no later than 120 days after its initial
20 meeting.

21 (c) Notify all local agencies about the purchasing program and
22 determine whether those agencies are interested in obtaining
23 thermal imaging equipment.

24 (d) Purchase thermal imaging equipment at the lowest possible
25 price from a reliable vendor that meets specified requirements.

26 SEC. 3. The sum of twenty-five million dollars (\$25,000,000)
27 is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the Office of
28 Emergency Services for the purpose of funding the thermal
29 imaging equipment purchasing program established pursuant to
30 this act.

31 SEC. 4. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the
32 immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety
33 within the meaning of Article IV of the Constitution and shall go
34 into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

35 To ensure that firefighters throughout California are equipped
36 with the best available equipment that can reduce their risk of harm
37 when fighting fires and increase the survival rate of fire victims as

- 1 soon as possible, it is necessary for this act to take effect
- 2 immediately.

O

